1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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Over the years I have become indebted to a host of people who have contributed to my expanding knowledge of Bornu so that it would be impossible to give a complete list of those whose share in this book is a significant one. Professor C. W. M. Hart first encouraged and guided my work, and his approach to anthropology has colored and given direction to my own. In Nigeria, Sir Kashim Ibrahim, G.C.O.N., K.C.M.G., C.B.E., LL.B., Governor of Northern Nigeria, has through the years helped to make my visits to Bornu fruitful and intellectually exciting. The Bornu Native Authority and the Bornu Provincial Government have extended the warmest hospitality and courtesy to myself and my wife and encouraged us in our work. Their forbearance with my research and their constant willingness to cooperate has helped to make Bornu into what some of them have called "my second home." I cannot claim to know everything about Kanuri society and culture; what I have learned is due not only to the kindness of Bornu officials but to the friendship of hundreds of Kanuri who have never failed to answer my unending questions and sometimes naïve curiosity with patient explanation. Dr. and Mrs. Abraham Rosman who were also out in Bornu in 1957 carrying out field research gave invaluable aid as colleagues interested in many of the same problems. At closer range, both in Bornu during my first field trip, and later after we returned to North America in 1957, my wife has served as a constant critic and discussant of almost every fact and interpretation put forward in this book and in my other publications on Bornu. In a very real way I owe her a debt as my collaborator and fellow researcher. Finally I am indebted to Professor John Middleton and David Spain who have read and made many helpful comments on an earlier draft of this book.

R. C.

Evanston, Illinois
November 1966

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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The Setting

The Land and the People

FOR AT LEAST a thousand years the drama of empires rising, falling, expanding, and shrinking has been played out in an immense area of Africa at the southern edge of the Sahara known as the Sudan. These states, Ghana, Mali, Songhai, the Hausa kingdoms, Kanem-Bornu, Baghirmi, Wadai, Darfur, and others like them, from the upper Senegal River basin to the upper Nile, form a band from east to west across Africa. Their histories provide some of the most resplendent grandeur of Africa's past. Many of these states have now been consigned to the history books; Ghana and Mali have disappeared although modern countries have resuscitated their names; Songhai was destroyed by the Moroccans at the end of the sixteenth century; the Hausa states were altered as they came under the hegemony of the Fulani Empire of Sokoto at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and little is known as yet about the early states to the east of Lake Chad. On the other hand, Bornu in the northeastern corner of Nigeria has continued its sovereignty in the Chad Basin throughout a millennium of tribulations and triumphs and it goes on today organized as a separate emirate within Bornu Province.

Like most of the Sudan, Bornu is open savannah country, generally quite flat except for a few stable dunes covered with scrub in the north and several long low ridges running northwest to southeast in the southern part of the country. The ridges are probably ancient lake-shores of a great inland sea whose contemporary remnant is Lake Chad—a large shallow fresh water lake into which flow a number of rivers from the south and west. The soil is sandy and covered with scrub bush, grass, and scattered trees, mostly thorny ones, except for the large spreading baobab, which dots the horizon here and there. In the 1930s the Nim, a hardy shade tree from India that thrives on the semi-desert conditions of northern Nigeria, was introduced to provide some forest preserves and year round shade in the villages. Here and there, especially at the bottom of the ridges, are large flat surfaces of hard clay that turn into gray-black mud during the rainy season. These provide clay for building materials and pottery, as well as water holes for the cattle of local villages and wandering nomads.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Today the empire of Bornu is a Muslim emirate, or kingdom, which forms a subdivision of Bornu Province in the northeastern corner of Nigeria. The emirate covers an area of 24,000 square miles and, according to the 1952 census, has a population of about 1 million people of whom 626,000 are Kanuri—the dominant ethnic group of the kingdom. There are also about 160,000 Fulani and Shuwa who tend their cattle in the area and who carry out a semi-nomadic way of life. Another 225,000 people belong to small pagan groups, from south of the province and the Cameroons, as well as from the Hausa-speaking areas to the west and from the other regions of Nigeria. The emirate also includes about 5000 non-Nigerians, who are from Europe, America, the Near East, and other African countries.

Including the emirate, Bornu Province has approximately 1,600,000 people, 750,000 of whom are Kanuri. Thus many Kanuri live outside the political boundaries of the emirate. Indeed Kanuri can be found in all major cities of northern Nigeria in substantial numbers as well as in the neighboring territories of Chad and Niger. In order to identify the population with a particular territory, however, it is convenient to think of the emirate sub-division of Bornu Province as Bornu, the traditional homeland of the Kanuri kingdom. These are the people who are the subject of this book; they describe themselves as "Kanuri—the people of Bornu." As noted above, outside this entity—of Bornu—there are many other Kanuri, and a political entity, Bornu Province. However, these will be referred to by their full names, while the word "Bornu" will be reserved for the political system, whose present expression, the emirate or kingdom, is continuous with the Bornu of pre-colonial times. This reflects as well the attitude of the people themselves, who use the term "Bornu" to refer primarily to the emirate rather than the larger area of Bornu Province.

One other point should be kept in mind about the population figures. There has been a more recent Nigerian census since 1952, and although the details are unknown as yet, it is generally accepted that the more recent figures are in the neighborhood of thirty-five to forty-five percent higher than those of 1952. This means that Bornu may actually have nearly 900,000 in population, and Bornu Province may reach as high as two million persons, as of 1966.

The Kanuri of Bornu live spread out over the entire area of the emirate, in 306 named and variously sized settlements, ranging from Maiduguri, the capital, with its 80,000 population, down to tiny hamlets of three or four households. Most of the people, about two-thirds of them, live in 248 named village units that range in size from 1000 to 5000. About one-quarter of the population, on the other hand, live in eleven cities whose population is 10,000 or over. This statistical information from the census masks an important point, however, for the towns and villages are really area units and each has within its territory, a set of satellite hamlets that often total to more than half the population of the town or village area. It is this pattern that gives to Bornu its "filled-up" quality even though the population density is approximately twenty-five to forty persons per square mile when calculated from the 1952 census figures or perhaps as much as forty to sixty persons per square mile on the basis of more recent counts. Riding out on horseback into the bush one never feels alone; here and there sprinkled in one or two mile intervals in all directions are little hamlets with their surrounding farmlands while more intermittently, perhaps every five or six miles, are the larger towns and villages. Ev-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

There are many greetings which are adjusted to social rank, so that one can say "Hello" to a social inferior, to an equal, or to a respected superior, and receive a proper reply recognizing the same distinction. People from other areas of Nigeria and Europeans claim it is a difficult language to learn. But this is probably due to the fact that the most widespread language of Northern Nigeria is Hausa, and many outsiders find they can get along with Hausa in the cities and larger towns without having to make the effort to learn Kanuri. Certainly today most Kanuri school children know some Hausa, and facility with it is spreading throughout all of Northern Nigeria.

Distinctive Kanuri cultural features, things which are of unique Kanuri origin, are not necessarily vitally important things. But they are, if you like, diagnostic features that indicate Bornu-ness in contrast to the cultures of other closely related ethnic groups in the Sudan. Perhaps the most striking feature is the women's hair style. At its most resplendent, it resembles the form of a Trojan helmet made out of an enormous braided ponytail that begins as a crest at the front-center of the head and curves up over the head to end in a slight upward curl of the tail at the back. Today a few of the young school girls are beginning to give up this traditional Kanuri coiffure and are taking on instead the Shuwa-Arab style of a smooth top of the head with hundreds of small braids clinging tightly to the sides and back of the head, at the ends of which are either loose ringlets or a pageboy effect.

Other features which are unique to Bornu are their knives and calabash carvings. These items are also unique to each ethnic group in the region, as are tribal marks cut on the face. Thus many unique features of Kanuri traditional life are thought of locally by many peoples as differentiating criteria for separating one ethnic group from another. A Northern Nigerian going to a market in Jos, or Maiduguri, or Kano, can spot a Kanuri, Fulani, or a Hausa calabash design at a glance just as he can tell another person's ethnic group by his tribal marks, or spot a Bornu knife among a pile of others.

On the other hand, the inside of a Kanuri gentleman's household is not significantly different from the household of a man of similar rank, wealth, occupation, and education, who lives in Hausa country seven or eight hundred miles to the west of Bornu. They dress in a very similar manner, eat very similar food, and share many of the same beliefs and attitudes about what is the best way to live, make decisions, treat one's family, friends, superiors, and worship one's God. Thus although there are some clear-cut diagnostic features representative of Kanuri culture, the people share in a way of life that is practiced by millions in the Sudan, or southern savannah land border of the Sahara desert.

Gathering the Material

I first arrived in Bornu in January 1956 and stayed there until August 1957. My next contacts occurred in the summers of 1964 and again in 1965, and hopefully I shall return in the future to study specialized topics to deepen my understanding of this society as it changes and progresses in the modern world. During our first visit my wife and I spent most of our time in the small village of Magumeri about thirty-three miles northwest of the capital. This was our home base. From here we also visited other parts of the emirate, especially the larger village of

101 This study was carried out among the Kanuri people of Bornu Province, Northern Nigeria. The writer and his wife were in Nigeria from August, 1956 until October, 1957. Almost all of that time was spent in the town of Geidam, in the northern part of the province.

A. Geography

131 1. Major geographic features.

Bornu Province is in the northeastern corner of Nigeria. It is bounded to the north by what was then Niger Territory, French West Africa (now the independent Republic of the Niger). [133] To the east lie the marshy shores of Lake Chad and, south of the lake, Cameroons, trusteeship territory administered as part of Bornu Province. The Yobe River, largest of the rivers flowing through Bornu into Chad, forms the northern border of the [161] province for much of its length. Maiduguri, the provincial capital, population 56,740, lies roughly in the geographic cen- [491] ter of the province. The main road through the province runs from Jos through Maiduguri and then on to Fort Lamy in Chad. [496] The railroad barely penetrates into Bornu, running from Kano and ending in the northwest tip of Bornu at Nguru, the second largest town in the province.

133 Bornu is a huge sandy plain, contrasting sharply with the rugged country of the Bauchi Plateau, which rises steeply to the southwest. South of the plain is the hilly area of Biu which is in Bornu Province. The flat plain extends eastward,

[text continues on p. 3]

132 nightly, often approaching freezing. This is also the time of the harmattan, a strong wind bearing down from the desert, carrying with it silt and fine white sand. The sand stings the face and chaps the lips. It penetrates all cracks and openings, covering everything with fine powder. The mornings are cold but the noon sun is always strong and brilliant.

This period is followed by the long hot season. For months the temperature ranges between ninety and one hundred degrees F., often soaring to one hundred and ten degrees. Clouds never appear and the glaring sun is reflected and intensified by the shimmering sand. Beneath the unrelenting sun the countryside withers and turns brown.

B. History

175 [101] The name 'Bornu' refers to the ancient empire of Bornu which existed here for more than a thousand years. The Kanuri people, builders of the empire of Bornu, moved into the plain of Bornu from the still more arid reaches north and east of Lake Chad. According to the historical sources, the Sefawa, a part of the Zaghawa tribe, allied themselves with the Teda in the neighborhood of Kawar at about 850 A.D. and proceeded to the southwest, organizing the early kingdom of Kanem, with its capital, Birni Njimi, near the northeastern edge of Lake Chad. Bornu was then the most southerly province. In 1389 the Sef dynasty, as it had then become, was expelled from Kanem and moved to Bornu. From that time onward Bornu became the center

To the immediate west of the Kanuri are the Hausas over whom the Kanuri once ruled. Signs of the early relationship between Hausa and Kanuri are still in evidence. The Hausa chief of Zinder, a large city in Niger north of Kano, still sent gifts to the Shehu of Bornu as a mark of allegiance upon being appointed to office by the French authorities. The Shehu in British Nigeria then sent him in return a ceremonial robe of office.

The Fulani have continued to infiltrate into Bornu and are numerous in the western sections of the province. In similar fashion, the Shuwa Arabs have in recent times been moving into Bornu from the east. The Shuwa represent the westernmost penetration of the Arabic-speaking African peoples. They are found concentrated in the southeastern sections of Bornu, in the region of Bama and Dikwa. Both the Fulani and the Shuwa are semi-nomadic pastoralists, living in a partially symbiotic relation with the agricultural Kanuri.

3. The Resistant Groups.

The Cameroon highlands, sixty miles southeast of Bama, remain the outpost of pagan peoples. The people of the Gwoza hills, one of the last "unpacified" areas in all Nigeria, still continue to resist their Moslem neighbors of the plains, as they had throughout the slave raiding of the Bornu empire. Some seventy thousand people, comprising a number of tribes and speaking several languages, live in the secure isolation of their mountain stronghold, resisting equally the penetration

177 of Moslems and Europeans.

4. Peoples acculturated to the Kanuri

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101 A circle of peoples surrounding the Kanuri have become, in varying degrees, acculturated to the Kanuri. These are relatively small groups who today are part pagan, part Moslem, and who speak Kanuri as well as their own individual languages. They lie in a sweeping circle along the borders of the area occupied by the Kanuri.

Directly east of the Kanuri, along the borders of Lake Chad and on the innumerable islands in the lake itself, live the Buduma. They probably represent part of the indigenous population of the plains of Bornu, forced into the inhospitable environment of the lake by the incoming Kanuri. Buduma living on the shores of the lake and in constant contact with Kanuri are Moslem and very Kanurified (acculturated to the Kanuri). Those in the interior are neither.

South of the lake and southeast of the Kanuri towns of Dikwa and Bama are two large tribes, the Mandara and the Kotoko (or Mogori). Kotoko towns like Segel, on the border of Chad, whose inhabitants are in immediate contact with the Kanuri from nearby towns, are very Kanurified. The people of Segel all speak Kanuri in addition to Kotoko, but the Kotoko are a distinct group. The Mandara, Moslem like the Kotoko, are more strongly identified with the Kanuri. Many individuals of Mandara origin live among the Kanuri and have adopted Kanuri cul-

ture. Many slave families among the Kanuri today were originally Mandara. The Mandara live to the immediate east of the mountainous area inhabited by the Gwoza pagans, and Mandara is the lingua franca for the Gwoza hills.

The Marghi of Damboa District, just west of the Gwoza hills, are perhaps the clearest case of a group which, though still identifiable as a distinct people culturally, is fast losing that identity and adopting Kanuri culture. The Marghi, up to recent times, served as a source of slaves for the Kanuri. Famous Kanuri title holders were Marghi slaves, called by the surname 'Marghi'. In Bornu Province they have become entirely integrated within the larger Kanuri society, within the present Kanuri-dominated political system, and within the urban-oriented economy of the area which looks towards the Kanuri capital, Maiduguri. Although older people among the Marghi still speak their own language, it is very common to find younger generation Marghi who have never learned Marghi and speak only Kanuri.

The Babur people live in the hilly upland area directly south of the Kanuri, centering around the town of Biu. They remain a part-Moslem, part-pagan people. The Bura and the Tera are sub-groups of the Babur. The upper classes of the Babur are entirely Moslem, and speak Kanuri. Many Babur have moved to Kanuri towns, particularly to Maiduguri. Often, after being accepted by the Kanuri community, they seek to deny affiliation with the Babur and call themselves Kanuri.

The Bolewa, southwest of the heart of Kanuri territory,

177 563 101 are a more distinct group. The Bolewa are one of a number of small tribes in the area centering around the towns of Fika and Potiskum. However, while the Bolewa are a Moslem people, the Kerekere, Ngizim, and Ngamo, who all live in the same area, are pagans. Since this region was under the direct control of the empire of Bornu, the Moslem Bolewa are oriented towards Bornu and the Kanuri. The upper classes of the Bolewa speak Kanuri. The Kerekere, Ngizim and Ngamo show little sign of Kanuri influence.

Lastly, the Bede of Gashua are a group completely surrounded by Kanuri. The town of Gashua lies eighty-three miles west of Geidam, between the Kanuri towns of Nguru and Geidam, both of which are larger than Gashua. The Bede have retained their own language, though almost all Bede speak Kanuri as well. They are a part-Moslem people, acculturated to the dominant Kanuri who envelop their small area.

177 563 [175] [636] The various peoples mentioned above are culturally distinct groups living along the borders of the area of the Kanuri and in constant contact with Kanuri culture. During the time of the empire of Bornu they were all to some extent subject peoples of the Kanuri. As a result they have become acculturated to the Kanuri, but have retained their identity as separate groups. This process is different from that of groups of people who inhabited the plains of Bornu at the time of the coming of the Kanuri and were subjugated and absorbed by the Kanuri. They have not become completely submerged, for they may still exist

2:Rosman E-5 (1956-1957) 1966 MS14 Kanuri MS14

177 563 as localized sub-cultures of the Kanuri, of which there are many. However, they are Kanuri culturally and recognize themselves as such.

D. The Over-all Forces Affecting Kanuri Culture.

161 The Kanuri number over a million. Three-quarters of a million Kanuri live in Nigeria. The Republic of the Niger is largely Kanuri in population in its southwestern sections.

178 105 177 The culture of a people never remains static; it is constantly changing in response to forces, both external and internal. Among the forces instrumental in bringing about changes in Kanuri culture one could cite the introduction of Islam and the concomitant changes occurring in its reinterpretation by the Kanuri; the economic ties with north Africa; the influences of the indigenous population of the Bornu plains as the Kanuri peoples moved into the area; the adaptations demanded by an expanding political system; and finally, the changes resulting from a decline of empire and ultimate conquest. Significant changes are occurring in Kanuri culture today, brought about by contact with Western civilization. The effects of European influence are strongly felt in many areas of life.

1. The Political Situation.

648 • [Dol] At the time that this study was carried out (1956-1957) Nigeria was a British colony, under the political control of the British colonial office. The political situation has changed

178 of the Kanuri, and the advantages which they have brought are readily understood. Other material changes--the postal system, telegraphs, electricity in Maiduguri, and the Maiduguri airport--only affect a small part of the population in the cities, and consequently are of minor importance.

654 178 Deliberate attempts have been made to institute changes in certain areas of Kanuri culture, with varying degrees of success. Agricultural programs have been introduced through the Bornu Native Authority. Veterinary and Forestry Depart- [743] ments also exist. Dispensaries run by Kanuri Malams exist in the larger towns. There is a hospital in Maiduguri staffed by [757] two European doctors. The Kanuri prefer their own form of treatment and rarely go to the dispensaries or to the hospital when ill. Nor do the Kanuri dispensars themselves have much faith in the medications which they distribute.

E. The Dynamics of Acculturation

101 The town of Geidam, in which the present study was carried [563] out, is in the northern part of Bornu, among a Kanuri sub-group 131 known as the Manga. Geidam is twenty-five miles south of Nigeria's northern boundary, a remote and somewhat isolated town 134 in one of the least developed provinces of Northern Nigeria. It is a town of mud surrounded by a world of sand, and the presence of the desert to the north is felt everywhere, in the land and in the people.

177 Though Kanuri culture is still an integrated and function- 121 ing whole, the influence of the Industrial West is bringing about

602 younger brother (kərami) of the child's father, a relative be-
627 longing to the child's dur bube, will avenge the child's death, and under those circumstances the law will not punish the avenger. The kərami of the child's mother will do nothing, for should he avenge the death of his sister's child the law states that he himself may be punished. This seems to be the only case for stating that the dur bube is stronger than the dur chambe.

174 611 It is extremely difficult to reconstruct earlier Kanuri social organization, and to indicate the changes which it has gone through. It is evident however, that patrilineal descent groups were present at the time of the accounts of Barth and Nachtigal, both of whom spent long periods of time with the Ka-
174 nuri in the nineteenth century. For earlier periods of the history of Bornu, names are given for tribes, and, in the history of federation, conquest and civil strife, these names sometimes have an ethnic or linguistic character; at other times they seem to designate political entities; and again they also resemble clans at times.

192 563 The Kanuri have a word, jili, which means "kind" or "sort", but can be used specifically for "nation," "people," or "kin
a [101] group." A person's jili would first be given as Kanuri; he would then indicate sub-groups of Kanuri--Kanuri proper, Buduwai,
563 Mobber, Manga, Kwoyam etc. These sub-groups today speak dialects
184 of Kanuri which are all mutually intelligible, and no other in-
174 [197] digenous languages. They represent ethnic sub-groups who now share in the same larger culture, but who may have entered Bornu

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 M514 Kanuri M514

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Preface

Field work for this study was carried out in Bornu Province, Nigeria, from January 1956 to August 1957. The author is grateful to the Ford Foundation Area Training Program under whose financial support the field work was carried out. Through a grant from the Knapp Fellowship Fund of the University of Wisconsin, the writer was allowed an unencumbered year following the field work in which to analyse and write up the material.

Although the author takes full responsibility for the following pages, they could not have reached their present form without the generous help of a number of people. Prof. C. W. M. Hart helped plan and guide the field work as well as reading and advising on earlier drafts of the present study. His intellectual stimulus has served as a major impetus in the development of the writer's approach to the study of society. Professors D. A. Baerreis and M. L. Barnett have given encouragement and advice throughout the course of the project and helped the writer in innumerable ways both administratively and in matters of scholarship.

Periodic conversations in the field with Mr. and Mrs. A. Rosman, graduate students at Yale University, helped clarify many points about the Kanuri as well as indicating areas of uncertainty and ignorance which required further work. To Mallam Abdullah Yajuwa of the Bornu Department of Agriculture I owe a sincere debt of gratitude for his interest in the project and his well run surveys. His patience and forbearance with the insatiable curiosity of an anthropologist deserve special mention. The Waziri, the Yerima and the Digma of Bornu also deserve special acknowledgement as men of affairs who spared us their

121 individual character, to an entire culture, many times the size of his single community.

The present study is, then, a community study, as must [10] usually be the case in the study of complex societies. The community is the town of Geidam, where the author and his wife lived for one year, from the ending of the rains in 1956 until the rains ceased once again in 1957.

A. The geography and ecology of Geidam.

162 632 Geidam, with its population of 11,032 is one of the largest towns in Bornu Province (see Table I) and represents urban Kanuri 563 culture. The people of the countryside between Geidam and 197 Nguru, some 110 miles to the west, are predominantly Manga, a Kanuri sub-group speaking a Kanuri dialect which differs slightly from Kanuri proper. To the east, towards Damasak, are Mobber, 101 197 another sub-group. In the town of Geidam, however, the towns- [369] folk are Kanuri, and speak standard Kanuri. This is primarily because urban Kanuri in Geidam have more in common with urban Kanuri coming from other large towns and cities, and share more with them than they do with the farming peoples of the small villages surrounding Geidam.

131 Geographically, Geidam lies in the northernmost part of the province, in fact, the northernmost part of Nigeria, since the border separating Nigeria from the independent country of 133 Niger is only twenty miles north. The land is a flat sandy [137] plain, with scrub vegetation, which becomes increasingly more

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Kanuri society is a social system whose boundaries are herein defined by the extent of the political boundaries of the Kanuri state known as Bornu Emirate. As a language and a culture, Kanuri transcends these borders but for present purposes the social system is defined by its political limits. Social relations within this system are hierarchically arranged for many of the most important functions of social life and it can be seen in the pages to follow that within the framework of the superior/subordinate relationship there is a high degree of opportunism which characterizes these social relations. Superior/subordinate relations are governed strongly by factors of power and authority. These variables make up a type of human action called governmental and Smith's view is adopted here that such behaviour is possible at all levels of human social organization.(1) Since it is relationships which are being described a two-sided definition is useful for analytical purposes. Looking at the relationship from the superior's point of view, power is the ability to order action and make decisions about the kind of action to be taken, and authority in the same direction is the ability of the superior to secure performance of the action ordered. On the other side of the relationship, power and authority refer to the subordinate's sensitivity and response to the power and authority of superior(s).

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Whether or not a particular theory of society is espoused by a writer, his work very often tends to support some contemporary conceptions while contradicting others. It should be emphasized that the writer had no pre-conceived notions about Kanuri social relations, nor was he attempting to support, refine, or negate one social system theory

(1) Smith, M. G., On Segmentary Lineage Systems, JRAI, 86, 1957, p. 50.

Chapter I
The Setting

[4]

101 For at least a millenium the drama of empire has been played out in an immense area of Africa known as the western Sudan which lies at the southern fringe of the Sahara and stretches in a roughly east-west direction across the continent from the Atlantic to Lake Chad. [178] Borno is one of the oldest of these and has maintained itself as an [681] ongoing political unit from early times into the modern world. Today the empire is a Muslim Emirate included as a sub-division of Borno 162 Province in the Chad basin of northeastern Nigeria. The Emirate has [131] an area of approximately 24,000 square miles and a population of [161] 1,005,000 (1952 census) of which 626,000 are Kanuri, and 156,000 are Fulani and Shuwa nomads.(1) The remaining 224,000 people include an unspecified number of small pagan groups in the south of the Emirate together with other Nigerians mostly from the Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba tribes. There are as well 5,000 non-Nigerians including Levantines, Europeans and Africans from other countries.

132 The Emirate lies within latitudes 11 to 13 N. and longitudes [131] 11 to 13½ E. and has a typical sub-Saharan savannah climate. There is a mean daily maximum temperature of 94° F. from March to June and a mean daily minimum of 66° F. from July to February. The rainfall varies from north to south, being somewhat heavier in the south. Mean rainfall figures in inches per month at Maiduguri for the last thirty-six years are as follows:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.01	-	.01	.25	1.59	2.56	6.81	8.80	4.23	.75	.01	-

(1) The Province as a whole has a population of 1,596,000 of which 753,000 are Kanuri. Thus over 80% of the present Kanuri population of the Province live within the boundaries of the Emirate.

13 Vegetation is open orchard bush with fine-leaved thorny trees predominating over an occasional broad-leaved variety. The terrain although very gently undulating here and there is for the most part flat and low lying (elevation 1,000 feet) with a more or less continuous short feathery grass cover. The loose, deep, easily worked sandy soil is excellent for cultivation while the lack of a thick vegetation cover makes the clearing of new farmland a relatively easy task.

241 The main cereal crop is millet and a considerable amount of guinea corn (sorghum) is grown, especially in the southern portions of the Emirate. In addition to the grain staples, beans, maize, cassava, cucumber, tomatoes, and squashes are also cultivated, while groundnuts 242 are used as the cash crop. In recent years, the agricultural department has been introducing fruit trees into the southern portions of the Emirate and scattering small orchards here and there through the northern bush with the idea of developing a local fruit industry.

101 [197] The people we are concerned with refer to themselves as Kanuri and speak a language of the same name. They call their territory Borno and sometimes refer to themselves as kam Bornube (the people of Borno). Among Hausa speakers in Nigeria the Kanuri and their language are known as Beri-Beri, but the Kanuri rarely use this term unless they are away from Borno.

144 [142] Racially the Kanuri are difficult to place. Like other people at the southern rim of the Sahara they vary from negroid to caucasoid in appearance and in skin colour from coppery brown to very 143 dark. Studies by Chalmers on blood group characteristics have shown 144 that when lumped with other northern Muslim peoples the Kanuri indicate considerable similarity in ABO, MNS, and Rhesus blood groups, to

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103 The locality within the Emirate in which concentrated field work has been carried out is Magumeri situated about thirty-five miles northwest of Maiduguri on a motor road. Magumeri is the name of
162 both the district and its capital town. The area has a much higher
634 proportion of Kanuri than the Emirate in general. In Magumeri district ninety-six per cent of the population are Kanuri while this is true of only sixty-two per cent in the Emirate as a whole.

162 The district contains 52,000 people (1952) and has an area
634 of approximately four hundred square miles. Within its boundaries
632 there are sixteen village area units including the Magumeri village area. This village area has a population of 4,200 of which roughly 2,000 live in the village proper and 2,200 live in hamlets within the village area.

When compared to other rural district capitals in the Emirate, Magumeri village area is slightly smaller than the average. Excluding the two large cities of Nguru and Maiduguri, the population range for district capitals varies from 1,400 to 11,000, and the average is 5,100 persons. Seven district capitals are smaller and eleven are
[166] larger than Magumeri village area. It is reported by long term residents to have been a much larger village at one time but to have been losing population steadily over the past twenty years to Maiduguri.

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621 Like all other Kanuri settlements, Magumeri is built in a U shape around a central plaza (dandal) open at the west end with the house of the highest ranking person at the east end facing west. Lesser political leaders in the village have their own smaller plazas, again
366 with their houses at the east end facing west. Another feature common to all Kanuri settlements is the placing of the butcher's section at the southwest side of a town or market so that the prevailing winds from
080 the northeast carry the odour away. Like other district capitals,

634 651 not care what the causes were for a consistent drop in tax receipts, the very fact of diminution indicated an inadequate District organization. In order to obtain the nomad cattle tax the DH must have a large group of horsed followers whom he keeps in food, clothing and all other expenses. If he does not maintain this large organization he cannot collect the taxes; if he does then he must embezzle (by British standards) tax receipts in order to do so.

634 631 648 Furthermore, as in any bureaucracy, standards and their enforcement change through time in their emphasis, often as a result of changing personnel at the top. A new N.A. councillor became interested in school latrines, and started punishing recalcitrant DH's for not maintaining adequate toilet facilities in the District school. A British officer interested in roads was replaced by one interested in prisons and so on. These conflicts in standards and changes in emphasis bring punishments in the form of dismissals, transfers to poorer paying Districts and even jail sentences - and all this emanates from the capital. The informal links between the DH and the center help him to predict the course of policy and prepare for any changes in enforcement of the conflicting standards under which he has to operate.

The Organization at the Center

643 [368] [101] In Maiduguri at the eastern end of the royal plaza is the palace of the Shehu, the focal point of Bornu political organization. As a language and a culture Kanuri transcends its state boundaries, but within its organized bounds, the Shehu is the formal head of state. All measures, policies and appointments made by the central agencies are done in the name of the Shehu. Officially he installs office holders from the rank of Lawan up, at an investiture of "turbaning" ceremony which publicly proclaims the person's right to office. The Shehu is

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The Success that Failed: An Experiment in Culture Change in Africa

By RONALD COHEN*

The economic and political development going on at this moment in the non-European areas of the globe is one of the truly monumental social revolutions in man's history, ranking in importance with both the neolithic and the urban 'revolutions' of the past. By the end of the present century, the standards of living of about two-thirds of the world's population will very likely have risen between five and ten times present level. The educational, political, religious, and social changes which will in all probability accompany this revolution are almost staggering to the imagination. However, that it is taking place is a simple fact. 121

At the core of this development are the changes and innovations in basic economic activities in the every day lives of people the world over, for these hum-drum practices are the foundation stones upon which higher living standards are built. Central planning, financial and technical assistance, and political policies, all make crucial contributions to economic development. However the full measure of cultural changes, and in this case technological innovation, requires the painstaking description and analysis which is the hallmark of anthropological research techniques. Like other social sciences, anthropology uses the data of man's social life for its empirical basis. But unlike other social scientists, the anthropologist observes the data of the human experience through his intimate face-to-face contact with the people from day to day throughout his field

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121 work. This means that minute details of innovation and social life in general can be recorded at the level of the "common man" as contrasted with the analysis of regional or national productivity figures, or of government policies, or United Nations statistics. What emerges is not, therefore, a total picture of the development process, but rather a grass roots view of the reaction to planned culture change by the people at whom the programme was aimed in the first place.

The purpose of this article is to document and analyse an innovation that succeeded technically, and yet failed because the human components of the innovation experience were not taken into account.

•101 The place is Africa, the time is 1956-57. But it could very well be the Near East, Asia or South America, anytime between 1940 and 1960. The people are the Kanuri of Bornu Province, Northern Nigeria, but they could be peasants anywhere.

The Context

174 The Kanuri of Bornu province in northeastern Nigeria have
175 been organized as a Muslim emirate in the Chad basin for
[131] many centuries. Their language classification by Greenberg
[642] (1954), early Arabic sources, and the scattered work of a few interested scholars, supports the notion of their continuity in the region, with possible origins somewhere to the northeast of
[177] their present habitat. The pre-colonial emirate kept up continual trade and cultural contacts with the Maghreb during its long history as an organized state.

161 The Kanuri number about one and a half million. The
311 population density is approximately sixty per square mile and there is no pressure on farmland, which can be extended simply by clearing new bush areas further away from the population
433 settlements. The majority of the people are peasants who carry
241 on three analytically separable economic activities. These consist
44 of (1) farming, primarily millet and guinea corn, supplemented by maize, beans, squashes, cucumbers, and groundnuts, (2) cash
[434] cropping, mostly groundnuts, and (3) a dry season non-farming activity connected with the market. Market activities are in

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242 197 During 1956-7 the Agricultural Officer of Bornu Province was a Kanuri who had studied tropical agriculture in Egypt, Iraq, Israel, and India. He was very enthusiastic about the introduction of citrus crops into the area, and spent a large part of his time helping to get this programme under way in the southern part of the province. He was also interested in introducing super-phosphate fertilizer into the agricultural practices of Kanuri cultivators to increase the yield of millet and groundnuts.

241 The average yields for the province using traditional techniques are approximately 600 lbs. of groundnuts (decorticated) and 400 lbs. of millet (threshed) per acre. The yields diminish as one travels north towards the desert, and farm sizes increase in proportion, although farm size is also dependent upon family size, marriage stability, and the socio-economic relations of the cultivator within the community (Cohen, 1959). Research has [242] proven that the use of super-phosphate fertilizer can raise agricultural productivity in Bornu from 25% to 40% above that normally obtained with traditional growing techniques.

Two methods of planting crops are known. The bulk of the farm plots for most cultivators are the *kulo karabe* or far farms.[1] These are located beyond a two hundred yard perimeter (approximately) around the village. Here crops are planted [221] a week or two after the first rains, hoed twice during the wet season, and harvested in the period from November to the end of December. In the *kulo fatobe* or near farms, within a two hundred yard perimeter around the village, and within the household itself, maize and vegetables are planted with compost, mostly from sheep, goats, horses, and burnt ashes. This is placed on the soil during planting, and may be applied again during the growing season. Sometimes the compost is put into the ground along with the seeds.

• 101 [162] The following course of events was observed in Magumeri, a comparatively small district capital (population 2000), forty-five miles northwest of Maiduguri, the provincial capital.

[1] Literally this expression means "bush farm," and *kulo fatobe* translated literally would be "house farm." For purposes of descriptive convenience and accuracy, the writer has coined the phrases "near" and "far" farms.